

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENTI 00123 081440Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 (ISO) W

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R 081046Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2027

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 0123

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, LA

SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER'S OBSERVATIONS ON BAN HOUEI SAI AND
INSTRUCTIONS FOR HANDLING OF FUTURE INCIDENTS

1. IN THE COURSE OF MY TALK WITH DEFENSE MINISTER SISOUK
JANUARY 7, HE MENTIONED THAT MANY LEADERS OF THE VIENTIANE
SIDE HAD SPOKEN TO HIM OF THEIR DISCOURAGEMENT IN THE AFTER-
MATH OF THE BAN HOUEI SAI AFFAIR AND OF THE IMPORTANCE THEY
ATTACHED TO PREVENTING A SIMILAR EPISODE ELSEWHERE. ANY
FURTHER INDICATION OF INEPTITUDE OR COWARDICE BY FAR OR
THE VIENTIANE SIDE WOULD HAVE GRAVE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES.

2. SISOUK SAID THAT HE AGREED WITH THESE SENTIMENTS. THE
BAN HOUEI SAI AFFAIR HAD GREATLY ERODED PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.
HE HAD TOLD THE MILITARY REGION COMMANDERS, WHO WERE ALL
IN VIENTIANE FOR A CONFERENCE, THAT THE BEHAVIOR OF FAR
AT BAN HOUEI SAI HAD BEEN A DISGRACE. HENCEFORTH, THEY
SHOULD BE ALERT AND VIGILANT. IF PATHET LAO TROOPS ENTERED A
TOWN IN THE VIENTIANE ZONE, THEY MUST BE RESISTED.

3. SISOUK WENT ON TO SAY THAT POLITICAL/MILITARY DECISION-
MAKING COULD BE PARALYZED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN AN
EMERGENCY BY THE PRESENCE OF THE PATHET LAO IN THE GOVERNMENT.
IT WAS THEREFORE IMPERATIVE THAT SENIOR OFFICERS ACCEPT
RESPONSIBILITY AND TAKE ACTION WITHOUT AWAITING ORDERS FROM

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VIENTIANE.

WHITEHOUSE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CINCPAC.

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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